

Abstract

This interdisciplinary research analyzes movement techniques from three styles of urban dance: liquid, digitz, and finger tutting. The analysis focuses on two aspects of the techniques: how they are performed by the dancers and how they are perceived by the audience. To analyze the performance, I apply Laban Movement Analysis, a rigorous methodology for analyzing human movement, and Labanotation-based analysis. To analyze the reception, I apply theories and principles of visual perception from the field of psychology. I bridge these two methodologies through an interpretive reading informed by my experience as a dancer as well as my experiences in attempting to learn the techniques. Through this reading, I argue that a) the movement techniques are carefully designed to elicit a particular perceptual response in the audience; and b) the accumulated perceptual response supports an interpretation of the dancing body as 'cyborgian' and of the performance environment as virtually constituted. I support this analysis by providing evidence on a) how the styles have historical connections with technological aesthetics; and b) how the urban dance community have in part used technological themes to define their bodies and their movement philosophies; and c) feedback from informants.